

Alison Gowman
Doctor of Civil Law
Durham Cathedral, 4 January 2024

Alison Gowman is a graduate of Durham Law School. Her career in the Law has been distinguished. She is now a consultant at DLA Piper UK LLP following her City career as a senior partner specialising in real estate. She has worked on investment and development transactions with specialisations in insolvency and waste management working with many international businesses entering the UK market. This background has helped her understand the need to bring a wider and more diverse group of people into City businesses.

But Alison has gone far further, and that public service is what the University wishes to recognise through this doctorate honoris causa.

Alison is the elected Alderman for the [Ward of Dowgate](#) in the City of London. In September 2021 she became one of the two Sheriffs of the City of London. As Sheriff, Gowman has responsibilities, supporting judges at the Old Bailey and promoting the rule of law. This role dates back to the Magna Carta, which enshrined the City of London's right to elect its lord mayor and sheriffs. The governance of the City of London was enshrined in the *City Charter* and *Magna Carta*, both of 1215. Indeed, Durham Cathedral is unique in holding three issues of Magna Carta. Alison has also been appointed as a member of Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral and as a Lay Canon, whilst remaining a Methodist. Alison has served on numerous City committees. Alison has also written on the City of London. In the eponymous book, subtitled "Who, what, why?" — explaining how its dozens of administrative committees sit alongside centuries-old institutions in the common council, liveries, aldermen, sheriffs and, of course, Lord Mayor — head of the City of London Corporation,

Another important theme of Alison's engagement is a more sustainable world. She has promoted a sustainable City environment for many years. She has now formed the Green Finance Institute, of which she is a non- executive director. The Institute

champions Green Finance as a model for meeting the pledged sustainable development goals across the World. She is the Co-Chair of the Conference of the Parties 26 (or COP26) Finance Taskforce. Alison wrote ahead of the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change that took place in December a blog entry on 'What to expect from COP28', She highlighted the loss and damage fund, the phase down of fossil fuels, the Voluntary Carbon Market, and the Just Transition. I wish to add a quote her here: "I am reminded of the view that resolving climate change is critical to achieving all of the aims in the Sustainable Development Goals. The fact is that there is still all to play for at COP28." And this will also be true for Conference of the Parties 29.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I present Alison Gowman to receive the degree of Doctor of Civil Law honoris causa.